

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-8 and 14-18 without prejudice.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) A powder injection method for use with a powder injection microchip, the powder injection microchip comprising:

a gas supply inlet for supplying gas;

control means for controlling the supply of gas via the gas supply inlet;

an outlet;

a channel in fluid connection with the gas supply inlet and the outlet;

a powder inlet in fluid connection with the channel, receiving an open first end of a powder reservoir, the powder reservoir having an opening at or near to a second end of the powder reservoir to allow egress of gas from the powder reservoir at a point distal to the first end of the powder reservoir;

the method comprising the steps of:

(i) supplying gas via the gas supply inlet to the channel and the powder inlet at a velocity sufficient to cause fluidisation of powder at the powder inlet;

(ii) reducing the supply of gas to cause powder to pass from the powder inlet and to collect in a region of the channel adjacent a point where the powder inlet connects with the channel; and

(iii) repeating steps (i) and (ii) a plurality of times, subsequent initialisation of step (i) causing the powder collected in the channel to be moved by the gas towards the outlet.

11. (Original) A powder injection method according to claim 10 wherein in step (ii) the supply of gas is reduced to zero.

12. (Previously Presented) A powder injection method according to claim 10 wherein the amount of powder collected in the channel is determined by a height of the powder in the powder reservoir.

13-18. (Cancelled).